SURF'S UP

A Film Script

By Jim Giatas

Six middle-aged friends (The Wretched Group) reunite to perform 60's rock music for the first time together in 31 years. Three of them haven't played music in public since high school graduation in 1968. Can they pull it off? Either way, at this year's reunion, the Class of '68 is in for a very special treat.

"WE SHALL NOT CEASE FROM OUR EXPLORATION.
AND THE END OF ALL OUR EXPLORING, WILL BE TO ARRIVE WHERE WE STARTED, AND KNOW THE PLACE FOR THE FIRST TIME."
(T.S. Eliot)

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By Jim Giatas

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FADE IN:

EXT. OUTER SPACE

Distant stars and galaxies are displayed against the black background of outer space. NEPTUNE, from The Planets, by Gustav Holtz is heard. The following quote fades in:

"WE SHALL NOT CEASE FROM OUR EXPLORATION.
AND THE END OF ALL OUR EXPLORING, WILL BE TO ARRIVE WHERE WE STARTED,
AND KNOW THE PLACE FOR THE FIRST TIME."
(T.S. Eliot)

EXT. OUTER SPACE. DAY

The full flat Earth is displayed showing both Sun and Moon (same size) positioned above. The Earth is then seen passing from day to night.

EXT. OUTER SPACE. NIGHT

The Earth is seen at night with all of mankind's electrical lights displayed.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
To an outside observer, there is no question that there is life on Earth.

The perspective moves in to show The United States full screen.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
During the past century, mankind has harnessed the power of electricity.
As Marshal McLuhan said, "We live in an electronic age."
This has made possible many benefits for humanity, such as the light bulb, sound recordings, radio, film, television, medical technology, computers, the Internet, and... the electric guitar!

The sudden zap of an electrical malfunction occurs as California goes completely dark to the sound of a loud electric guitar chord.

INT. GRAPHICS

The song, DO IT AGAIN, by The Beach Boys (1968), is played during the following introductory music-video style sequence. A large bass drum head fills the center one third of the screen. Inside the drum head, ocean waves are rolling in toward the audience as the sun is setting.

The film's title, SURF'S UP, appears inside the drum head followed by,
WITH THE WRETCHED GROUP. Both "then" and "now" photographs of The Wretched Group
players appear inside the drum head. Information about each Wretched Group member is presented outside the drum head on both sides also in a "then" and "now" configuration.

The following are the names and identifying information for each band member:

“HEN” (aka: “Sal-A-Mander”, "FIBER", “Alex Congdon”) VOCALS
VIBES (THEN) HANK McKee, HUSBAND, FATHER, SKI MAGAZINE EDITOR (NOW)
By the way, Henry Arthur McKee’s initials actually spell, “HAM”
Henry Arthur McKee, spells HAM!

“BENJ” RHYTHM GUITAR AND VOCALS (THEN) THOMAS BENTON ESQ., ATTORNEY AT LAW,
HUSBAND, FATHER, SINGER/SONGWRITER, RECORD COMPANY ENTREPRENEUR (NOW)

“MOD" BASS GUITAR AND VOCALS (THEN) JIM MODISHER, BIG ISLAND GENERAL CONTRACTOR
IN HAWAII, HUSBAND AND FATHER (NOW)

"SMACKS" THE ORGAN PLAYER (THEN) MICHAEL MCENTARFER, PHARMACIST, HUSBAND, FATHER,
SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT (NOW)

“QUALE” THE DRUMMER (THEN) JIM PASQUALE, SINGLE, GAY, SPLAT BALL FACTORY WORKER,
FARM LABORER, DRUMMER (NOW)

"GAD" LEAD GUITAR AND VOCALS (THEN) JIM GIATAS, CHRISTIAN SINGER/ SONGWRITER/
MUSICIAN AND SCREENWRITER (NOW)

As the song, DO IT AGAIN, comes to its conclusion, the drum head reads: TOGETHER AGAIN FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 1968.

After this message, CAN YOU DIG IT? appears. As this message fades out, the original Wretched Group drum head fades in (in the Old English lettering that Gad’s father drew). All film credits appear at the end of the film.

EXT. OVERHEAD PHOTOGRAPH OF FREDONIA, NEW YORK. DAY

Each place or person referred to is shown following the overhead photograph.

GAD (V.O.)
Fredonia is a small college town in western New York State.
It's the home of the first natural gas well in the world.
Blink your eye, and you will miss it.
The first Grange association in the United States started here.
It was also in Fredonia that the very first Women's Christian Temperance Union was founded.
In the Sixties, Johnny Carson once marveled that Fredonia had more bars per capita than any other place in America.

**The Marx Brothers called their fictional nation, “Freedonia,”
in the movie, Duck Soup. That's Freedonia with two “E’s.”
(Pause)
"One morning I shot an elephant in my pajamas.
(Pause)
“How he got in my pajamas, I don't know."**

Gad raises his arm and does an imitation of Groucho Marx cigar-taps with his fingers - eyebrows raised

EXT. BARKER COMMON PARK. DAY

GAD, age 49, 6” tall, 220 lbs., physically fit, short, graying hair and neatly trimmed beard, wearing his black Greek fisherman’s cap, black short-sleeve shirt, dark green shorts and sandals without sox, is walking through Barker Common Park (East Side) to the fountain in the middle of the park. It is a perfect summer day.

GAD
**Fredonia was also home to The Wretched Group during our high school years - 1964 to 1968. The Wretched Group was always just a small town rock band.
We never played anywhere beyond thirty miles from our hometown.
We never earned more than one hundred dollars at any one time.
And, we never made a record...**

Gad stops walking at the park's fountain. He turns to face the audience.

GAD
We had some of the best times of our lives back then...

Gad starts walking out of the park on the sidewalk.

GAD
**When graduation came, we were all eager to move on.
We knew that we would all go our separate ways, and that
The Wretched Group would be no more.
High school was over, and so was The Wretched Group.**

Although he did not intend to. Gad stops, and then sits down on a park bench. However, Gad does not sit on the lower seat area. Instead, he sits on the top of the backrest with his feet on the seat area. He does this in one smooth motion as he has done many times before.

GAD
**As the years passed by, none of us ever thought that The Wretched Group should, could or would ever happen again...
It was something that was over for good, like being seventeen.**

A group of six seventeen year old guys walk past Gad loudly. Two of them carry guitar cases.
Gad pauses, waiting for the noise to pass and laughs with a wink and a nod.

GAD
That's what makes this story even more incredible.
Because, against all the odds, the guys and myself decided to catch one more ride on the good ship Wretched Group.
And our thirty first high school reunion provided to be the perfect excuse.

Gad climbs down from the park bench. He starts to walk away, stops, turns around, and takes a few steps back to express an amusing afterthought.

GAD
Mod, Hen, and Smacks haven't played music in public since high school graduation in 1968.

Suddenly, there is a minor fender bender car collision right next to where Gad is standing.
It makes a very loud noise. Gad looks over to make sure that no one is injured.
The two female drivers get out of their cars to inspect the damage. They are both teenagers.

GAD
Well, after we communicated by e-mail for six months, the Wretched Group was ready to rock.
Benj made a practice tape for each of us that helped tremendously.
By the time we met up, we were all on the same page - at least musically.

The high school yearbook photo of the Wretched Group is shown. Gad is not in this photo.
While this color photo fades out, the Gad alone in the park photo negative fades in.

GAD
Some things have changed a lot since high school and some things haven't changed at all.
The guys were awfully apprehensive about my Christian spirituality.
Especially when contrasted with Jag's coming out as a homosexual man.
I discovered they were much more comfortable having a gay drummer in the band than having an outspoken Christian.

Gad turns to walk away again. He takes a few steps and turns around again.

GAD
I don't know why, but it seems that the music you liked when you were sixteen just stays with you forever. For me that's always been the Pet Sounds album.

The musical introduction to WOULDN'T IT BE NICE? plays – ending with the solo drum beat.

INT. UNITED STATES MAP AND MUSIC VIDEO. DAY

A map of the United States fills the whole screen. The Byrd's recording, GOIN' BACK, is heard as the four out of town Wretched Group members travel to Fredonia. Different color dots represent their movement on the map: Mod from Hawaii, Quail from Neosho Missouri, Hen from Stowe, Vermont, and Benj from Kingston, New York. Each Wretchie is then seen in a brief music video goin' back to Fredonia and The Wretched Group. Mod by air (with his son), Quale by bus, Hen by car (with his wife and daughter), and Benj by car (with his wife).
Each may be shown just coming into Fredonia at the village limits. Music stops.

EXT. GAD'S HOUSE. DAY

Smacks drives his Dodge Durango 4WD to Gad's house. He stops at the curb. Gad has been waiting, and comes out the front door, carrying a small box of paperback books. Gad enters the Durango.

GAD
Howdy, Smacks. Are we ready for this?

SMACKS
Don't you know it, Gad. This is it.

Gad hands Smacks one of the books.

GAD
Smacks, Here's that book I wrote about called.
The Case For Christ. I want to give one to each Wretchie and you're first.

Smacks takes it gratefully, looks at it briefly, and then puts it down.

SMACKS
Thanks, Gad. But remember, we all agreed – no religion or politics

GAD
And no fig leaves. Let's rock.

Smacks and Gad drive to Newt's house a few blocks away. Each house is very well kept in nice
middle class neighborhoods. Smacks and Gad pull into Newt's driveway. There is a Wretched Group poster stapled to a tree. Gad is the first up the front stairs. Newt opens the front screen-door with a laughing, happy greeting.

HEN
Gad!

Newt steps out on to the front porch wearing shorts, a t-shirt, and sandals. Gad gives him a bear-hug, lifting Newt off the ground.

GAD
Sal-A-Mander! It's been too long.

HEN
Way too long!

Gad lowers Newt, who is still laughing, and hands him the gift book.

GAD
Newt, here's that book I wrote you about called.
The Case for Christ. I hope you can dig it.

Newt takes the book reluctantly.

HEN
Thanks, Gad.

Smacks walks up the front porch steps.

SMACKS
Hi Newt! Glad you made it here okay!

HEN
Smacks! Come on in guys and meet the fam.

The three old friends walk into the house together. Newt drops the book on the telephone stand as if he will never look at it again. The postcard invitation is shown as SMACKS holds both sides up for HEN to see.

SMACKS
Did you get your postcard invitation?

HEN
Yes! It was awesome! How did that "Don't ask why, just come" happen?

SMACKS
That was Gad.

GAD
It was on the invitation to Holiday Inn, from the Bing Crosby movie.

HEN'S companion, JANE, age 47, 5'5" tall, brown hair and folksy in appearance, enters the foyer.

JANE
Hi! I'm Jane. I've heard a lot about you guys already.
In fact, you are actually legendary at our place.

GAD
I'm Gad. Glad to meet you Jane.

SMACKS
I'm Smacks.

HEN'S daughter, MISSY, age 17, blonde and beautiful and Missy's friend, SARAH, age 17, dark hair and very good looking, enter the foyer. Sarah isn't feeling well.

HEN
This is my daughter. Missy, and her friend, Sarah. Sarah has a bit of a headache.

GAD
Haven't we met before?

MISSY
Yep. At my grandfather's funeral. You gave my dad a tape of your Christian music and some Bible pamphlets. He won't remember though.

GAD
Nice to meet you, Sarah. Hope you feel better soon.

Everyone moves into the back dining room.

HEN
You guys know that my mom broke her leg. She's in the Jamestown hospital, and she won't be able to come to the gig this week.

GAD
We'll just have to bring the gig to her! When it happened, I came right over.

HEN
That meant a lot to her. Gad.

GAD
In show business, it's always been considered bad luck to wish anyone "good luck" before they go on stage. So you say, "Break a leg." And never mention "Macbeth".

SMACKS
Now, we have the broken leg!

Everyone laughs. Hen lights up a cigar.

SMACKS
We'd better get going.

HEN
Jane and the girls are staying here. Jane is into pottery, and the neighbor is an art professor. Jane is always ready to learn new things

and improve her art.

JANE
Thanks, sweetie. See you later.

GAD
Newt, do you remember the way to Bemus Point?

HEN
The Surf Club! We'd drive back pretty smashed, if you remember.

GAD
Yeah, that was really stupid, we could've...

SMACKS
Benj visits his parents' cabin there. It's right behind the Surf Club.

HEN
Lettice leaf!

Smacks, Gad and Newt leave Newt's house by the rear door.
Smacks and Gad get into the Durango. Newt gets into his Ford Escort station wagon with Vermont license plates.
Both vehicles leave Newt's driveway and head out for Jamestown via Bemus Point.

EXT. BENJ'S COTTAGE. DAY

Smacks and Gad arrive at Benj's cottage in Bemus Point on Chautauqua Lake. Gad gets out of Smacks's Durango first. Benj is walking toward them.

BENJ
Gad!

Gad gives Benj a big bear hug, lifting him off the ground.

GAD
This is a happy day, Bungee.

BENJ
I thought I was Benji.

Gad lowers Benj, and he simultaneously gives Benj the paperback book.

GAD
Here's that book I promised you guys.

BENJ
The Case for Christ! I've heard of it. Thanks.

Smacks walks over to where Gad and Benj are talking. Smacks and Benj shake hands, and then hug briefly.

BENJ
Smacks, old man, it's so good to see you.

SMACKS
Don't you know it.

Hen arrives. Smacks, Gad and Benj are silent as they watch Hen exit his car. Hen walks the fifty feet between them as if he is walking on air.

HEN
There's the Benj! Remember me, dude?

BENJ
Didn't you used to sit at our lunch table in high school?

Everyone laughs. Benj's brother, CHRISTOPHER, age 47, a younger version of Benj, joins the group with a professional video camcorder, and proceeds to videotape this meeting.

HEN
Don't you know it.

Benj and Hen hug each other warmly.

GAD
Chris, it’s good to see you again.

CHRISTOPHER
Hi, Gad. You remember my sister, Holly don't you?

GAD
This all keep getting stranger and stranger, doesn't it?
The last thing I knew, I was 18. What happened?

Christopher and Holly laugh along with Gad. Benj walks over to Gad.

BENJ
Gad, come into the cottage with me. There’s something I want you to see.

Benj and Gad walk over to the cottage and enter.

INT. COTTAGE LIVING ROOM. DAY

Gad sees a Dan Electro electric guitar resting on a guitar stand.

GAD
Benj, you got the Dan Electro.

BENJ
It’s a real treat to play. You're welcome to use it anytime this week.

GAD
Thanks, but I think I stick to playing rhythm on my acoustic.
I’m nowhere near Jimmy Page! Not even what I used to be.

Benj walks over to his briefcase, opens it, and takes out 10 pages of music arrangements, perfectly written by hand, that are intended for the horn players.

BENJ
Gad, I thought you'd like to see these.

GAD
Beautiful work, Benj. Looks just like a first draft Mozart.
Did you see the movie, ”Amadeus?”

BENJ
Yes! It’s one of our all time favorites.

GAD
You know, I never really appreciated Mozart 'til that film came out.

BRENDA, Benj’s wife, age 46, 5'8” tall, long dark hair, somewhat thin, yet healthy, enters the cottage.

BRENDA
Boys, the other guys are ready to go.

BENJ
Gad, this is Brenda, my wife.

GAD
Hi, Brenda, We met once, along time ago.

BRENDA
I remember. It was a coffeehouse performance, wasn't it?

GAD
Yes it was.

BENJ
We'd better be going.

GAD
Right.

EXT. COTTAGE FRONT YARD. DAY

Smacks and Hen approach Gad and Benj.

SMACKS
Just follow me guys, I've got the directions to the equipment rental guy in Jamestown. We'll go slow.

HEN
Guys, I'll be staying in Jamestown after we load the equipment. I want to visit my mom at the hospital. I'll be there tonight in Fredonia though.

BENJ
Sounds good. Give her our love when you see her.

Gad and Smacks walk over to the Durango and get in. Hen walks over to his Escort and gets in.
Benj walks over to his Volvo sedan and gets in. The vehicles are seen leaving Bemus Point.
They all cross the bridge over Chautauqua Lake. At the far side of the bridge. Smacks stops his Durango, on the side of the highway.

INT. SMACKS'S DURANGO. DAY

SMACKS
Gad, I think we're going the wrong way.

Hen pulls up alongside of Smacks. Smacks and Hen roll down their windows.

HEN (Laughing)
Where we goin'? Are we there yet?

SMACKS
We'd better turn around. The other way is more direct.

HEN
Okay, dude. We turn around.

EXT. JAMESTOWN DESTINATION: SUBURBAN HOUSE AND GARAGE. DAY

Each vehicle pulls up in front of the equipment owner's house. LARRY, age 35, 6'0' tall, long hair, slightly overweight, waves everyone to park in front of his house.
The Wretchies park, exit their vehicles, and follow Larry into his garage.

INT. LARRY'S GARAGE. DAY

SMACKS
Larry, I'm Smacks, the guy on the phone.

LARRY

Pleased to meet you Smacks, I'd know you anywhere.
Here's what you said you'd be needing.

Larry presents a box of microphones and cables, and points to five microphone stands. Hen lights up a cigar.

HEN
This is all starting to feel vaguely familiar:
packing, setting up, taking down... I forgot about this part.

BENJ
Yeah, Newt, this is the hard part. But, it's all worth it.

HEN
Yeah, I remember that part best of all.

GAD
Benj, check out this custom amp.

Gad is admiring Larry's custom/wood enclosed, guitar amplifier. Larry's attention is quickly drawn to his amp.

LARRY
This beauty is my pride and joy. I built it myself.

Benj inspects it closely, with admiration.

SMACKS
Check this out. This bass amp is a monster.

Larry's attention changes to Smacks and the bass amplifier. The amp is a large, two fifteen inch woofer design, in two parts: the huge speaker cabinet, and the separate amp "head".

LARRY
It'll cut through just about anything. Channel one isn't working though.
Just use channel two, okay?

GAD
Larry, do you play in a band?

LARRY
Yeah. We're called "Alex Congdon."

Hen does a huge double-take.

HEN
No way!

EXT. MOD'S PARENT'S COTTAGE. DAY

Mod, the bass player, is reunited with the others at his parent's lakeside cottage on Chautauqua Lake. This is that same cottage where Gad and Lori did their acid trip years before.

SPIKE and SMACKS arrive first. They park and exit the Durango. They walk about 200 feet to the cottage. Gad has the paperback book gift in his hand. As Gad climbs the deck stairs. Mod comes out the cottage door. He is very happy to see Gad

MOD
Gad, is that you? Man have you changed!

Gad gives Mod a big bear hug, lifting him in the air.

GAD
I'd know you anywhere, Mod!

Gad lowers Mod. Mod is slightly amused.

MOD
I don't remember that we ever used to hug...

Gad gives Mod the gift book.

GAD
Mod, here's that book I wrote you guys about. I hope you can dig it...

Mod looks at the book very briefly, and then puts it down without any interest in it at all.

MOD
Thank you, Gad.

SMACKS finally catches up. He climbs the three stairs to the cottage deck, and appears just at the right moment. Mod is relieved that Gad did not preach any religion to him. He is a preacher's son after all.

SMACKS
Hi there, Mod.

MOD
We're back!

EXT. MOD'S COTTAGE. DAY

MOD
Aloha, SMACKS! It's good to see you again.

Mod and SMACKS shake hands warmly. Hen and Jane arrive with Missy and Sarah.

Hen flies up the deck stairs. Hen and Mod warmly embrace.

HEN
I don't believe it! You haven't changed at all.

MOD
Neither have you, dude. It's great to see you again.

Mod's teenage son, DUSTY, age 16, 5’4" tall, looking very unlike his father, comes out of the cottage onto the deck.

MOD
Guys, I want you to meet my son. Dusty.

EVERYONE
Hi, Dusty.

HEN
Mod, this is Jane.

MOD
Pleased to meet you, Jane.

Jane and Mod warmly embrace.

JANE
You're a legend at our home. Mod.

Mod is slightly embarrassed.

HEN
This is my daughter, Missy, and Missy's friend, Sarah.

Dusty is very embarrassed in meeting two good looking girls that are in his own age bracket.

MOD
Dusty, come and meet Missy and Sarah.

Dusty walks over hesitatingly. He shakes each girl's hand with his eyes lowered, but doesn't speak. The girls giggle at his awkwardness and leave immediately to walk down to the water's edge. Gad sees Dusty’s hurt and speaks to him.

GAD
Dusty, did you know that your dad was a great bass player when he was your age?

DUSTY
No. This is all very strange to me.

Benj arrives with Brenda and is really happy to see Mod.

BENJ
Look at this wretched dude!

Benj and Mod embrace warmly.

MOD
Aloha, Benj. It's great to see you again.

Benj waves to Brenda for her to come closer.

BENJ
Mod, this is my wife, Brenda. Isn't she lovely?

MOD
Welcome, Brenda. It's nice to meet you.

Mod speaks to the whole group.

MOD
Is anybody hungry? My parents made lunch for us inside. Come and get it.

INT. MOD'S COTTAGE. DAY

Everyone goes inside the cottage. Lunch sandwiches and drinks are set up on a large table in the living room. REV. MODISHER, age 79, a Methodist minister, and MRS. MODISHER, age 75, his loving wife, welcome everyone.

MRS. MODISHER
Hi boys! It's so good to see you all together again.

REV. MODISHER
Yes, indeed! Who would have thought that you all would get together again to play music as the Wretched Group?

MOD
I never thought we'd ever do it

HEN
Guys, it had to happen!

BENJ
Who da thunk it?

MRS. MODISHER
How long has it been?

MOD

Thirty-one years, Mom.

MRS. MODISHER
No... It can't be... But I guess it is.

Everyone laughs at the absurdity of a Wretched Group reunion after all these years.

EXT. MOD'S COTTAGE. DAY

Everyone has their lunch sandwiches and drinks, and each person goes outside the front door to another covered porch where a long table and benches are set up.
The Modishers have fed many groups before, and they are very good at providing a pleasant mealtime.

Once everyone is seated, Rev. Modisher prays. Only Gad lowers his head reverently.

REV. MODISHER
Thank you Lord for this day, for our families, and for our friends.

Mrs. Modisher interrupts, with loving kindness, knowing that her son, and probably his friends, do not share their faith, or their desire to pray.

MRS. MODISHER
Amen. Okay, everyone dig in.

While everyone is eating. Gad pauses to tell a joke.

GAD
Does anyone know what Noah said when he got on the ark?

Everyone is silent. Then Mrs. Modisher breaks the silence.

MRS. MODISHER
No, Gad. What did Noah say when he got on the ark?

GAD
Now I herd everything.

HEN
I don't get it.

SMACKS
Now, I heard everything?

Gad repeats the punch line with emphasis on the word, "herd".

GAD
Now, I *herd* everything.

Jane starts laughing. The laughter is contagious as one after another person gets the joke.
Benj and Brenda look at each other. They moan as they get the joke simultaneously.

BENJ AND BRENDA
Ohhhhhh.

MRS. MODISHER
We give up, Gad.

Gad repeats the joke one more time.

GAD
What did Noah say when he got on the ark? Now, I herd everything...

HEN
I still don't get it.

JANE
Sweetie, what do shepherds do when they want to move their sheep?

Suddenly, the light goes on in Newt's brain. He is happy that he finally got the joke. But, at the same time, he is slightly embarrassed.

HEN
Okay, now, I *herd* everything.

Mod, still laughing, more at Hen than at the joke, gets up from the table to go inside.

MOD
Anybody want anything?

No response from anyone. Mod goes inside. Gad, who has been sitting next to Mod, takes Mod's sandwich from his plate. All eyes are on Gad. Gad opens up Mod's sandwich.
He takes a slice of cheese, still encased in its plastic wrapper, and places it inside Mod's sandwich, while removing the slice of cheese that was in the sandwich unwrapped. Everyone starts to giggle.

GAD
This is payback for all those Campus School kids that got the sour milk from Mod in their lunch line way back when.

Mod comes back out. Everyone gets quiet suddenly so that Mod won't suspect anything. As Mod sits down, everyone is waiting with a lot of anticipation for him to take a bite of his sabotaged sandwich. Hen starts to laugh, but is barely able to hold it in. Mod doesn't notice.

MOD

How did the first rehearsal go?

BENJ
It'll get a lot better. We were just fooling around.

HEN
It wasn't that bad.

MOD
Quale gets in tomorrow, right?

Finally, Mod reaches for his sandwich.

SMACKS
Yeah, he gets in tomorrow, about noon. He's staying at Charley's.

Mod takes his sandwich in hand. It is one of those moments in which time seems to slow down.
Every movement is in slow motion, and every detail of that motion is significant.
Suddenly, in normal time. Mod, in the middle of his first chew,
realizes that something isn't quite right.

MOD
Hey. What... is... this?

Mod is amused. Uproarious laughter from everybody. Mod realizes that everyone is in on the joke.

MOD
Dusty, did you do this to your father?

DUSTY
It wasn't me!

BENJ
It was Gad.

Mod looks at Gad dead seriously, although he isn't angry at all. While everyone is still laughing, Mod quietly speaks to Gad.

MOD
Payback's a bitch, Gad...

SMACKS
Check this out. Benj brought his Wretched Group scrapbook.

Hen gets up. He walks over to Benj and Brenda. SMACKS is sitting next to Benj.
Gad and Mod also rise and join them there.

SMACKS
Look at this ad.

HEN
Saint Anthony's Youth Center. "Where the In-Crowd Goes."

BENJ
Remember when we were told not to play "The Hump"?
We got banned there for good after we performed it.

HEN
Do you remember that girl from Dunkirk? She could do The Hump so good that we used to play the song three or four times just to see her moves.

Gad gives in to the memory. He takes a deep breath, closes his eyes, and smiles. He remembers a name he will never forget.

GAD
Sandi. Her name was Sandi. She was Shannon's best friend.

HEN, BENJ, SMACKS AND MOD
Sandi!

HEN
Do you think she'll be at the gig?

GAD
God only knows...

Mod's parents are amused. They both excuse themselves to go inside.

MRS. MODISHER
Have a good rehearsal, boys. We'll be seeing you.

SMACKS
Thanks for lunch.

GAD
Yes, thanks for your hospitality.

Everyone else is absorbed in the scrapbook.

MOD
I can't believe that you kept all of this!

BENJ
Yeah, it helps give me some perspective...

BRENDA

**Don't let him fool you guys. He really loves those days with you all.
He talks about it all the time...**

MISSY
So does my father.

Missy looks at Hen. He returns the look and smiles.

DUSTY
And so does mine!

SMACKS
I guess we're all guilty on that count.

INT. REHEARSAL BASEMENT. DAY

**Gad, Smacks, Hen, Benj and Mod are all at their positions, ready to perform.
Jane is moving about videotaping. Missy and Sarah are sitting on the basement stairs.
Brenda is sitting just above them. Dusty is over in the corner next to Mod.
Gad turns on the P.A., which acts as a master switch for all the amps.**

**ROSEMARY, age 49, Class of 1968, very well preserved and attractive, and her date,
TOM, age 49, Class of 1968, bald, slightly overweight, make their way down the basement stairs
with Rosemary's brother, VINCE, age 45, long hair, drummer.**

TOM
The Wretched Group rides again! Guys, I heard that you could use a drummer till Quale gets here. This is Rosemary's brother, Vince.

HEN
A drummer? Well alright! Hi Rosemary.

BENJ
Thanks, Vince. Jump right in. Hi Rosemary.

Vince makes his way to sit down behind the drum set. Brenda, Missy and Sarah move up the stairs to let Tom and Rosemary have a seat at the bottom of the stairway. Mod plugs his bass cord into channel one of the bass amp. There is a loud buzzing sound. Mod looks upset.

GAD
Mod, channel one is broken. Just use channel two. Hi Rosemary. Welcome, Vince.

Mod removes the cord from channel one. The buzzing noise stops. Mod then plugs into channel two, which works just fine. Mod proceeds to play a quick incredible bass run to demonstrate, mostly to himself, that he still has what it takes. Hen laughs in appreciation, and in amazement.

HEN
Just like riding a bike. Mod!

MOD
Right

BENJ
Let's try Sunshine of Your Love.

Benj plays the familiar lead guitar introduction to the Cream song, SUNSHINE OF YOUR LOVE, alone for two bars. Gad and Mod join in, playing the same lead notes at the third bar. Vince and SMACKS come in at the fourth bar. All five musicians play another four bars. Hen begins to sing the first verse at the ninth bar. The song is played through without any obvious mistakes. It is an electric moment, as these musicians enter into that special zone of musical oneness.

In high school, the Wretched Group played this song many times. Now, it is as if they have simply picked up exactly where they left off. Each Wretchie now knows that they can pull this thing off.

Benj plays the Eric Clapton guitar solo with note by note perfection. However, it is obviously not Eric on guitar. Whatever that missing ingredient is, nobody cares. The guitar playing is better than simply being "good enough."

When the song comes to an end, the Wretchies are elated. Everyone in attendance is wildly appreciative.
They know now, for sure, that they will not be embarrassed by a ghost of the former Wretched Group trying to relive their glory days. The Wretched Group was good back then. They still are...

EXT. REHEARSAL HOUSE AREA AND DRIVEWAY. DAY

On the following day, Tuesday, Quale is seen walking along the sidewalk alone.
He turns into the rehearsal house driveway. At the other end of the driveway.
Hen, Benj, SMACKS and Mod are gathered. Hen is the first to spot Quale.

HEN
Oh ...My... God! It's Quale!

QUALE
Hi, guys!

BENJ
I can't believe it!

SMACKS
Quale, you made it!

MOD

Look at you, man!

QUALE
Mod, you old dawg.

BENJ
Quale, help yourself to some beer.

QUALE
Now you're talkin'. It was a killer bus trip.

Benj hands Quale a beer. Quale is all smiles. Each Wretch is somewhat taken back by Quale's pale appearance.
Quale's teeth are very bad. This is ironic because his father was a dentist.
Quale and his father did not get along together at all. Quale's ability to make everyone laugh has not diminished though. Nobody hugs Quale. Hen slaps his back. The others shake hands.
Quale smokes almost continually.

QUALE
How's the music goin'?

HEN
Now that you're here, it's gonna be great!

QUALE
Where's the Gad?

SMACKS
Gad's in the basement tweaking the controls. Let's go make some noise.

As the Wretchies head for the basement Mod speaks to SMACKS.

MOD
You know. SMACKS, it all does come back so fast. It feels like it's only been a week since we played together.

SMACKS
It is amazing isn't it? Like riding a bike. You just don't forget...

INT. REHEARSAL BASEMENT. DAY

Hen is first down the basement stairs. Gad is working on the P.A. controls.

HEN
Gad, Quale has arrived!

GAD
Well all right...

**Gad stops tweaking the P.A. to reach for the last gift book he wants to give to Quale.
Benj, Smacks and Mod come down the stairs and go to their instruments.
Each Wretch turns on his amplifier except for Gad. As Quale comes down the stairs.
Gad is ready for him.**

QUALE
Gad! You look just like your father!

GAD
My old pal. Quale...

**As soon as Quale has both feet on the carpeted basement floor.
Gad gives him a big bear hug welcome, lifting him off the ground.**

QUALE
Whoaa!

**Quale is laughing, amused, and somewhat embarrassed. Gad lowers Quale.
He places the book into Quale's hand.**

GAD
**Quale, I'd like you to have this book, The Case for Christ.
It's the same one that I gave to the rest of the guys.**

**Quale looks around at the rest of the guys with mock exasperation,
yet in a subtle way so that Gad won't notice. Gad sees it though, but acts as if he didn't.
Quale does not like Christians as he has had many bad experiences as a Gay man.
Quale speaks insincerely.**

QUALE
Thanks, Gad...

**Quale takes the book, and then goes right over to sit behind the drum set.
Quale tosses the book aside as if was only yesterday's newspaper,
and of no importance to him at all. From this moment on. Quale acts very cold to Gad.
When he speaks, he is speaking to the others, as if Gad isn't even present.
It is an intentional disregard, well rehearsed with others that he has no use for.
All of the other Wretchies are seriously apprehensive that Gad will ruin the reunion
with Hell and brimstone preaching. This apprehension is needless because Gad is all
about love.
Jane, Missy and Sarah arrive. Jane starts videotaping.**

HEN
Quale, this is Jane, my daughter. Missy and her friend Sarah.

QUALE
Hi...

Brenda, Rosemary, Tom and Vince arrive.

BENJ
Quale, this is my wife, Brenda.

Quale and Brenda hit it off right away.

QUALE
Foxy lady!

Benj instantly plays the familiar Jimi Hendrix lead guitar riff that follows the lyric "Foxy Lady" in the song of the same name. Quale laughs and immediately starts to play along with Benj the intro to Foxy Lady. Smack's wife, DEIDRA, age 47, red hair, mother of two daughters, comes down the basement stairs.
She mistakenly thinks that the song is for her and smiles.

SMACKS
Hey guys, this is Deidra my wife and mother of my children.

EVERYONE
Hi, Deidra.

Gad straps on his 12 string guitar. He also turns on his amp. His guitar sounds pure, without any effects. Nevertheless, it is electric.

GAD
And now, after 31 years...

Gad starts the introduction to DO YOU BELIEVE IN MAGIC? Everyone instantly recognizes the song.
All the Wretchies join in for the first performance together of all six of the Wretched Group's original members. With Quale on drums, the band sounds even better. The missing ingredient has been added, and there is genuine musical magic in the air. Quale struggles to keep a straight face on, but this is in vain. He breaks out into an ear to ear grin as the music continues to play. Quale is an exceptionally talented rock drummer. Hen sings lead on this song. It is a perfect rendition of the Lovin' Spoonful's recording. The guys are amazed at what they can still do after all these years. So is everyone else in the rehearsal basement.

DO YOU BELIEVE IN MAGIC? The answer on everyone's face is "yes," I almost forgot, but "yes." I believe in magic because I've just felt it again, after all these years…

EXT. REHEARSAL HOUSE BACKYARD PATIO. DAY

The Wretched Group is taking a break, waiting for the local newspaper reporter who has agreed to interview them for a "then and now" photo article for the following day, the day of the reunion gig. The Group of Wretcheds are all sitting around a round patio table. Hen and Benj are smoking cigars. Quale is smoking cigarettes. Everyone is drinking beer except Gad, who always brings his own water in a thermos.

Quale has just finished telling a very dirty obscene joke. The other guys are not amused. The newspaper reporter/photographer, STANLEY, age 50, balding with a beard, appears on the patio.

STANLEY
This must be the place. You guys the Wretched Group?

SMACKS
That's us.

STANLEY
Can we do the interview out here?

HEN
Sure we can.

Gad gets up from his seat. He has a straw hat with a large brim and colorful band. Spying a full length mattress 20 feet away, Gad leaves the patio area and walks over to the mattress.
Gad lies down on his back with his hat over his face. He does not really want to participate in the interview. Nobody notices or cares. They are used to odd behavior from Gad. Stanley opens his notebook.

STANLEY
So, tomorrow night you'll be playing your first gig together as the Wretched Group since 1968 - thirty one years ago.

HEN
Yes, it's really incredible... to the six of us anyway.

SMACKS
I never thought it would ever happen.

BENJ
Who-da-thunk-it?

MOD
I always hoped that we would...

QUALE
It's crazy, but true.

STANLEY
It's at the Four Points Dockside Cafe, from eight to midnight, right?

BENJ
Yes it is. We'll be playing four 45 minute sets.
We've got about 70 songs in our current manifestation.

STANLEY
I noticed all the posters in the area.

SMACKS
The artwork was done by Benj back then. We also sent out postcards to our classmates and friends because this gig is not really part of the official class reunion.

STANLEY
That's the Fredonia High Class of 1968, right?

HEN
Yes, in-dee-dee.

MOD
Our class reunion really has become a Wretched Group reunion for us.

BENJ
It couldn't have happened without the Internet. We communicated a lot for the past six months, so we pretty much know what we're getting ourselves into.

MOD
Yes, Benj made rehearsal tapes for each of us with the chords and keys all figured out.

SMACKS
It's been a long time since we played together, even though these songs are really unforgettable. Benj's work was a really big help. Really.

Benj and the others pick up on Smacks's over-use of the word "really."

BENJ
Really. Our rehearsals are going really well. Really they are.
When our drummer. Quale, arrived, it really all came together...

QUALE
You're too kind... Really.

STANLEY
When did the idea for this reunion first come up?

BENJ
Hen and I talked about it on a skiing trip last Christmas.
Then, we contacted the other guys, and we all decided to go ahead with it.
The songs were chosen, the tapes were sent out, and we all began to rehearse on our own.

QUALE
That's right this week is the first time we've actually played together

since 1968.

STANLEY
That fateful year again... What band was your greatest influence?

The Wretchies all look at one another and laugh.

EVERYONE
The Beatles.

BENJ
About 23 songs on our set list are Beatles' songs.

Hen takes a long puff of self satisfaction on his cigar.

HEN
All you need is love, baby.

STANLEY
Did any of you guys go into the music business professionally?

BENJ
I've played in bands, wrote songs, made a few demos,
and started up my own record company called, Planet Noise Records.

HEN
Shameless commercialism...

SMACKS
Shameless.

QUALE
I've been playing drums professionally for a long time now.

BENJ
Gad writes and performs contemporary Christian music.
He used to be our lead guitarist, but he asked me to play lead
during this reunion.

STANLEY
Why is that?

MOD
There's a lot of theories... Something about Obi Wan Kenobi
and surrendering to the Force.

SMACKS
Gad has also written an original song for our reunion called,
"Old Friends," which we'll be performing at the gig.

STANLEY
Do you guys think that you'll ever perform together again?

HEN
Sure, in another thirty years...

MOD
It'll have to be in Hawaii.

STANLEY
Well, that's it, guys. Could I get a shot of you all playing a song?

SMACKS
Sure. Where's Gad anyway?

Everyone gets up from the patio table. Quale, Stanley, Hen and Benj head for the basement.
Smacks and Mod spot Gad. They both walk over to him.

SMACKS
Is he really sleeping?

MOD
I've know guys who could sleep anywhere and at anytime.

SMACKS
Gad, are you in there?

MOD
C'mon, Gad. We're going to play a song for the reporter.

Gad arises, taking off his hat from his face, squinting at the sunlight, and smiling.

GAD
Did I miss anything?

No one answers as both Smacks and Mod are out of ear shot. Gad puts on his hat and sunglasses which he intends to wear for the photograph session. He walks towards the basement alone singing the first verse of, "Zip A Dee Do Dah."

INT. REHEARSAL BASEMENT. DAY

The Wretched Group is repositioned so that all of the guys will be in the photograph. Gad is wearing his hat and sunglasses.

BENJ
Let's do "Gloria."

The band plays a pretty good version of GLORIA. Much better than the previous attempt with just Smacks, Hen, Gad and Benj. Mod's bass, and Quale's drums, make a very significant improvement. Stanley is taking a lot of photographs, and he changes position frequently. Nobody is playing for the camera though. The band stops playing when the song is supposed to end. The Newspaper photo is shown.

STANLEY
Thanks a lot, guys. Check out tomorrow's paper.

Stanley leaves. The Wretchies go back to their original positions. Serious rehearsals follow in a montage of songs. These songs are not played in their entirety. Only segments are shown and heard. These are joined together in a time compression manner. More time is passing than shown on screen, as this is not in real time, except for the music. The song segments include the following: GOOD LOVIN', MUSTANG SALLY, TIME IS ON MY SIDE, WILD THING and in a special number, SOUL MAN, Smacks's daughters, and their friends, back up the Wretched Group on sax (female), sax (female), clarinet (female), trumpet (male), trumpet (male.) and flute (female). Each musician has a music stand with written out arrangement parts that they read from. At the end of this rehearsal montage, time returns to normal.

BENJ
Tomorrow, the gig!

GAD
Let's be here at five to pack up.

MOD
Are we all goin' to the fair tomorrow?

HEN
The Chautauqua County Fair.

BENJ
Yes, Just like old times.

SMACKS
Count me in.

QUALE
Me too. Me too. This is all just too good.

GAD
Can't make it, guys. But I'll see you here at five.

The guys all leave. Only Gad remains in the basement. It's ten o'clock. Gad is staying behind to take down, and pack up, the sound system, the amps keyboards, mics, mic stands, and cables. He works diligently to make it easy for the other guys for tomorrow's performance.

CAROLINE, NO (1966) by Brian Wilson plays. The week's rehearsals, and events, are fast-forwarding through Gad's mind. As Gad finishes neatly positioning the last amplifier next to the other equipment to help make it easier on the other guys before tomorrow's gig, he walks over to inspect the packed equipment.

**Gad then walks over to the light switch for the basement area.
With his hand on the switch, he turns to look back. The final rehearsal is over.
It is a moment lost on the others. Only Gad feels this moment.
He then turns away from the basement, and turns off the lights.
The basement is dark now. Only the stairway is illuminated.
Gad slowly walks up the stairs as if he is ascending to a spiritual dimension
that is entirely new to him. As Gad climbs out of sight,
the stairway light is turned off leaving only darkness.**

INT. GAD'S 1996 SILVER FORD TAURUS SEDAN. NIGHT

**Gad closes the car door. He puts on his seatbelt. He starts the car.
He turns on the car lights Gad puts the car into reverse.
He pulls out of JD's driveway. There is no other traffic.
The extended CAROLINE, NO continues to play. Gad drives down Temple Street.
He makes a right on to Maple, and then a left on to Central Avenue.
He drives past the State University and then goes under the Interstate 90 bridges
that separate Fredonia from Dunkirk. Gad then drives past the Chautauqua County
Fairgrounds.**

**It is half past midnight. The fair is officially closed for the night,
but some lights are still on. There is loud heavy metal music from the beer tent.
Gad drives by without slowing down, and without looking over at the fairgrounds.
A few houses past the fairgrounds. Gad turns left on to Lafayette Street.
He has traveled approximately 2 miles. On Lafayette, Gad drives past 3 houses.
At the fourth house. Gad slows down and stops, in front of the brick house
that his girlfriend, Suzi used to live in so long ago. At this moment,
the song, CAROLINE, NO comes to a conclusion. When the song ends,
Gad notices SANDI, age 45, natural blonde, naturally beautiful,
sitting on her front porch steps at the house next to where Suzi once lived.
Gad slowly pulls up in front of Sandi's house, he stops his car,
turns everything off, and gets out.**

EXT. SANDI'S HOUSE. NIGHT

As Gad walks up to Sandi's porch. When Sandi sees Gad, she screams.

SANDI
Oh, My, God!

**Sandi gets up. She quickly rushes over to Gad. They both hug each other warmly.
There is a full moon tonight, and tomorrow night.**

SANDI

Gad, it’s so good to see you.

GAD
It's been too long Sandi.

Gad breaks off the hug in a friendly way, even though, and maybe because, Sandi wanted him to kiss her as a prelude to an erotic encounter. Gad then moves to sit down on the step where Sandi was seated. Sandi follows him. She also sits down. Gad faces forward. Sandi faces Gad.

SANDI
Do you drive by Suzi’s house a lot?

Sandi stands up.

GAD
I never intend to...

SANDI
She was in town last week. She saw the Wretched Group posters that are up everywhere. Did you know that she is divorced now?

GAD
Aren't we all?

SANDI
In one way or another...

GAD
Did she...

SANDI
You don't have to ask. Of course she wanted to know about you.

GAD
You know Sandi, we ended badly. I've always wanted to ask for her forgiveness. I was so young and foolish.

SANDI
We all were...

GAD
In one way or another.

SANDI
Sometimes, I regret my days in Hollywood when I use to ...

GAD
You had a lot of success, if I remember right. I saw all of your films.

SANDI
It didn't mean much. I came back here when my parents got sick.
When they passed away... I got the house. It got real easy to stay.

Sandi looks away wistfully.

GAD
I remember your parents, Sandi. They were always so good to us back then.

SANDI
I don't think they ever knew what I was into. They would not have approved.

GAD
I regret, most of all, the abortion I went through with Barb…

Sandi sits down again. Gad stands up.

SANDI
I remember her!

GAD
I was devastated after the abortion. It nearly killed me...
The sorrow and the guilt... It was mostly on an unconscious level.
But, when I look back, I see how I must have been punishing myself
for murdering my own child.

SANDI
Oh, Gad... Abortion isn't murder. It's a legal medical procedure.
The fetus isn't a person anyway.

GAD
That's just what they want us to believe, Sandi.
Every unwanted group is depersonalized first...
Then comes the slaughter, and the holocaust...
The killing gets real easy after that.
There was a Jewish holocaust survivor who lectured here recently.
He said, that after all these years, he still didn't know
how such madness could happen.

SANDI
But abortion is different.

Gad sits down again.

GAD
I don't think so. What we have today is a silent holocaust with over
30 million innocent, babies routinely murdered,
mostly for convenience, and always for profit.

I believe that life begins at conception,
and that human life is sacred because we are created in God's image.

SANDI
Gad, that religion stuff is just a fairy tale for children,
just like Santa Claus. There really isn't any God.
Humans are only animals, and it's survival of the fittest.

GAD
Far from it, Sandi. Man is not an animal evolved by chance,
and might certainly does not make right.
Right and wrong come from God. By God's revelation,
we have knowledge of absolute truth, and absolute morality.
The reason we get so messed up is because of sin.
Things are not as God originally wanted them to be
and mankind is in a fallen condition.
But in Christ we can be forgiven and find peace with God.

Sandi is uncomfortable with Gad's sincerity and the subject matter.
She changes the subject abruptly

SANDI
I can't believe that you guys are playing tomorrow night.
I haven't felt this way since high school.

GAD
I know what you mean. The memories can intoxicate you,
if you're not careful.

Gad turns to speak into the camera. The scene is a clouded, mystical scene apart from reality.

GAD
I wore a light blue and white Neru Jacket to my senior high school prom in 1968.
I also wore sandals without sox, of course.
Suzi wore a tight blue Grecian style gown with one shoulder bare.
One of the teacher chaperones said that the chaperones were very disappointed.
All the other guys wore those awful rented tuxes.
Everyone was always very jealous because Suzi was a total knockout.
She was a very beautiful cheerleader from a rival school.
To say she was hot would be a complete understatement!
Seriously adventurous for small town high school in 1968! Right?

The camera returns to Sandi's house in normal reality.

SANDI
Hence, the drive by tonight?

GAD

I guess so...

SANDI
Do you ever think about us. Gad? We used to have some pretty wild times together, didn't we?

GAD
I'll never forget, Sandi.

SANDI
Do you want to come in? You know, you can still ...

GAD
Sandi, after the abortion with Barb, I fell into a loveless marriage that was all about sex. I guess the pain from the abortion shut down my emotions. I didn't know that I was going in the wrong direction until I hit the bottom...

Sandi is surprised that any man wouldn't jump at the chance of having sex with her, especially the old Gad.

SANDI
What do you mean?

GAD
Sandi, I found forgiveness for all of my sins in Christ. I can't go in with you because I'm a Christian now.

SANDI
Oh... That's nice if it works for you. So... You don't want me anymore?

Sandi makes her availability obvious by lowering one leg, and bringing her other leg closer to her body. She is wearing tight cutoff shorts, and the message is clear.

GAD
I didn't say that...

SANDI
Then what are you saying?

GAD
Please don't get me wrong, Sandi. I'm always gonna love you. But we could never find romance. There's just no me and you.

SANDI
I still want you. Gad. Romance is highly over-rated anyhow.

GAD
Things have changed for me, Sandi.

SANDI
The flesh wars against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, huh, dude?

Gad does a big double take.

GAD
That's it exactly, Sandi. You know I'm always gonna want you.

SANDI
I understand, Gad. I've been searching too.
But, I don't want to stop having fun yet. Ya know?

GAD
Fun has become a strange thing for me now.
I struggle with the things I used to love.
And, the things I used to dismiss have taken on profoundly new meaning for me...

Sandi changes the subject again.

SANDI
Are you guys gonna play, "The Hump," tomorrow night?

GAD
I'm afraid so.

SANDI
I used to love turning you guys on to that song.

GAD
Yes, I remember. You certainly were an inspiration to us all back then.

SANDI
That song still turns me on.

GAD
Will Suzi be there tomorrow night?

SANDI
With that girl, who knows? She said that she wanted to go.
You still love her, don't you?

GAD
I always will, Sandi. Just like I'll always love you.

SANDI
I thought so. I never stood a chance, did I?

GAD

You were Suzi's best friend, Sandi.

SANDI
But what about all those times we had after you two broke up?

GAD
We were there for each other when we needed someone.
Those days were really different.
Before the incurable and killer diseases showed up..

SANDI
It's scary, isn't it? You could be with someone just one time...

GAD
Who was with someone just one time...
We all have to be very careful these days.
God has always warned that sex outside of marriage is wrong.
We never understood that it was for our own good.

Sandi self-consciously moves out of her sexy position.
They are both facing forward towards the street.

SANDI
The spirit against the flesh again...

GAD
That's why romance and love are so important. It's God's way.
When we go His way, there's blessings, even miracles.
When we go in the opposite direction...

SANDI
You don't have to tell me. Is it too late for us, Gad?
After so much flesh, is romance and love impossible?

GAD
Sandi, dear, Jesus said that, with God, all things are possible –
even for wretches like us.

SANDI
I wish I had your faith. Gad, but I don't.
I have to go my own way, always have...

GAD
Sandi, I'm startin' to fade. I'd better be going my way home now
to get some sleep. You know, we've got about 100 songs,
and we're ready to rock.

Gad makes a huge wide open yawn and the moment is not lost on Sandi
as first Gad and then Sandi stand up.

SANDI
That's my boy... Will you play, "The Hump," for me tomorrow?

GAD
That's just about guaranteed, old girl.

SANDI
Go now. Get some sleep. You really do look wiped out.

GAD
I'm half-past brain-dead now

Gad and Sandi embrace warmly. Gad kisses her forehead tenderly.
As Gad turns to walk away, Sandi smacks him on his rear-end with a loud thwack.
They both laugh. Then Gad walks down the front sidewalk into the night.

SANDI
Break a leg, dude!

EXT. GAD'S HOUSE. DAY

A NEWSPAPER BOY, age 10, is seen delivering the Dunkirk newspaper along Gad's street.
It is sunrise. Gad's car is parked in the driveway. He gets out of the car.
He is dazed as if he just woke up. Did Gad fall asleep in his car last night?
Or, did he go back to spend the night with Sandi? There is no way to tell.
It is a mystery. Gad walks to the front door of his house.
The newspaper boy hands him his paper.

NEWSPAPER BOY
Did your mother know that you were out all night?

GAD
Wouldn't be the first time, amigo.

NEWSPAPER BOY
Your picture is in the paper. Man, did you look radical with that long Beatle haircut. My parents talk about The Wretched Group all the time. They are big fans.

GAD
We were in the Class of 1968 together. Not much hair left though…. The Bible says God knows us so well that He numbers the hair on our head. He's been subtracting on some of us though…

NEWSPAPER BOY
You guys were pretty popular, weren't you?

GAD

Let me tell you something about "popular."
These days, "popular" has become a substitute for morality.
Most people find their identity in what they think the popular opinion dictates.
Today, most people find their sense of self in what the popular opinion
tells them they must be. When they conform, they lose touch with their real selves
and can't get no satisfaction for real. They become alienated.
Morality becomes whatever the popular opinion dictates.
And, since popular opinion is always changing, morality becomes relative.

The newspaper boy looks puzzled.

NEWSPAPER BOY

We learn in church that morality and truth are absolutes.
They never change because God has given them to us.

Gad is very pleased that the young boy already knows what Gad was trying to tell him.
A burden is lifted.

GAD

I agree with that whole heartedly. Still, many people today would rather
be popular in Hell than happy in Heaven...

NEWSPAPER BOY

With God's love, we can reach them. These are the last days.
There's not much time left until Christ returns.

GAD

This is truly the midnight hour.

NEWSPAPER BOY

I agree with you wholeheartedly. I have to be going on with my route now.

GAD

God bless you, my friend.

INT. GAD'S FRONT PORCH. DAY

Gad opens the large picture window, and climbs in, just like he did on that fateful night
in high school when his father was waiting up for him.

INT. GAD'S LIVING ROOM. DAY

Gad is inside the living room. He is laughing to himself for doing such a silly thing.
He surveys the living room. His gaze stops where his father used to sit.
There is a cross on the wall that Gad put there after his father passed on.
Gad pauses... Then, he turns around to close the window, making sure to lock it.
His mother comes down the stairs. Her name is MARY, age 78.

Gad's father's song, MY DARLING MARY, plays.

MARY
Dear, did you just come in the front window?

Gad and his mother are laughing because the answer is obvious.

GAD
I guess so, Mom... Must be a full moon tonight.

Mary walks into the living room. Gad walks over to her to give her a big hug.
He kisses her forehead tenderly. The embrace is momentary.

MARY
Sometimes I think you've never grown up.

GAD
Well, I must have gotten bigger. I don't fit through that window like I used to.

MARY
Tonight's the big night for the Wretched Group.
Let me make you a special breakfast.

Gad and his mother walk into the kitchen from the dining room.

INT. GAD'S KITCHEN. DAY

Gad still has the newspaper in his hand. He opens it out on the kitchen table, turning to Section B right away. Gad discovers the photo/story on the back page of Section B.
Mary is already cooking over the range

MARY
Did they print your story, dear?

GAD
They sure did. Not a bad job.

The newspaper photos and story are shown.

EXT. LAKE ERIE BEACH AT POINT GRATIOT IN DUNKIRK. DAY

Quale has slept on the beach. He has one suitcase next to his sleeping bag.
He is seen waking up. He goes for a swim.

INT. MOD'S COTTAGE BEDROOM. DAY

Mod is seen waking up. His alarm clock-audio system plays the song, MOONDANCE, by Van Morrison, for a few seconds.

INT. BENJ'S COTTAGE BEDROOM. DAY

Benj and Brenda wake up together. Benj must have fallen asleep playing his guitar. There is a guitar between Benj and Brenda. They both laugh when they see this. It has happened many times before.

INT. HEN'S BEDROOM AT HIS MOTHER'S HOUSE. DAY

Hen is seen waking up Jane with drops of water from a straw withdrawn from the nightstand water glass. Jane playfully screams and laughs. This has happened many times before. However, this time Hen had been videotaping Jane's reaction. The camcorder was set up on the nightstand.

INT. SMACKS'S BEDROOM. DAY

Smacks wakes up to his dog's eager wet kisses. Smacks has an extremely exasperated look on his face. It's time to take the dogs out. Two other dogs also want Smacks's attention. Smacks gets out of bed. Deidra also wakes up when Smacks comes over to her side of the bed to kiss her good morning.

INT. SANDI'S BEDROOM. DAY

Sandi is seen lying in bed with a warm smile of total satisfaction on her face. Her bedroom is messed up from passionate activity. How it got that way is a mystery. Did Gad return to her last night or someone else? No answer is given.

EXT. A MAP OF THE CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS. DAY

Smacks, Quale, Benj, Hen and Mod are represented by dotted lines on the map. Fair sounds and their laughter are heard. The feet of the five Wretchies walking are superimposed over the fairground map.

INT. CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY HOME FOR THE AGED MEETING ROOM. DAY

Gad is seen singing in the recreation room. There are 30 invalids in wheelchairs listening to him sing his original song, "THE LIGHT OF MEN."

EXT. THE STREETS FROM FREDONIA TO DUNKIRK. DAY

While the song, FUNKY BROADWAY is playing, the Wretchies are seen driving to the gig. Gad is in his silver Taurus. Mod is in his Parent's Crown Vic. Benj and Brenda are in their Volvo. Smacks and Deidra are in their Durango. Hen, Jane, Missy and Sarah are in the Ford Escort. Quale has hitched a ride with Smacks and Darla. He is sitting in the rear seat with the equipment all around him. Basically, only his face is showing.

EXT. THE DOCKSIDE CAFE. DAY

**Time is speeding up. The Wretchies are seen carrying equipment and setting up.
This is not normal time. The Dockside Cafe is a patio/bar area of the Four Points Hotel in Dunkirk, New York. The cafe overlooks the Chadwick Bay harbor.
There are many boats moored in the adjacent marina.
There is a brief sound check for which Gad stands a distance away to judge the sound.**

EXT. DIMITRI'S GREEK FAMILY RESTAURANT OUTSIDE PATIO. DAY

**The song, FUNKY BROADWAY, continues to play. Time slows.
The six Wretchies are seen having dinner with Jane, Missy, Sarah, Darla, and Brenda.
Gad is sitting next to Hen at the left end of the long table. Gad was aware that this trip would have been a financial brurden for Hen so Gad had arranged it so that Hen and his family could stay for free.**

HEN (astonished and grateful)
Padre, how'd ja do it? When I tried to pay for our room, the girl said that you took care of it.

GAD
**I just told the hotel manager that you were working for free.
And that the band was bringing in thousands of dollars.
Then I asked, as nice as you please, if your could stay for free.**

HEN
Nice move, Gad! Hey, I got your eats.

Gad leaves first. He changes into his Hawaiian shirt, and dress white long pants in a public restroom. He comes out shinning, gets into his car, and drives to the nearby Dockside Cafe. FUNKY BROADWAY ends.

EXT. DOCKSIDE CAFÉ. DAY

**Gad arrives at the Dockside Cafe ready to rock. There are about 30 people already there.
Harsh rap music is being played by the YOUNG FEMALE BARTENDER, age 27, with dyed red hair and face piercing jewelry. Gad is immediately aware that a change is the audio environment is required. Gad goes over to the bartender.**

GAD
Okay if I put on some other music that we dig?

BARTENDER
No problem, dude.

**The bartender immediately turns off the rap music. Gad goes over to his P.A. sound system and turns it on. The Beach Boy song, GOOD VIBRATIONS, comes on.
The audio environment is changed from bad to good.**

The other Wretchies begin to arrive. First Hen, Jane, Missy and Sarah come in to the patio of the Dockside Cafe. They are shinning. Smacks and Deidra are next,

with Benj and Brenda just slightly behind them. All the Wretchies are wearing their Hawaiian shirts. Mod and Quale come in last. Everyone is shinning. Mod, Smacks and Hen are wearing shorts. Benj and Quale are wearing long-leg, well worn jeans.

**There are about 150 people in the audience now.
Hen has his special wretched moccasins on that he wore
at the Wretchies' last gig in 1968. It is 8:00. The audience begins a spontaneous, simultaneous, clapping. The Wretched Group takes their place on stage.
The stage is only about two feet high, but enough to make it seem much bigger.
The low budget stage lights are turned on. The female bartender acts as the M.C.**

BARTENDER
**Ladies and gentlemen... Together for the first time since 1968...
The Wretched Group...**

**There is a huge roar from the audience, applause, and cries of disbelief.
The sound system is much louder than in the rehearsal basement.
However, Gad knows what he is doing, and the sound system is mixed to perfection.
The vocals are emphasized, yet the instruments have power and clarity.**

SMACKS
Right back at you.

HEN
What's the first line?

GAD
Are we gonna tune up?

MOD (Laughing)
We never did before...

**Benj starts out the famous lead guitar riff, and the Wretchies launch into
the Young Rascal's song, GOOD LOVIN'. The song goes off without a hitch.
The Wretchies are very much energized by the live audience.
The song ends. There is wild applause of appreciation and nostalgia.**

GAD
31 years, baby!

HEN
All right. All right. At least we know we're gonna survive this thing...

**Benj starts out the lead guitar introduction to The Rolling Stones' song, SATISFACTION".
The other guys know exactly what to do. The audience recognizes the song right away.
Newt sings lead in every song unless otherwise noted. Gad, Mod, and Benj sing back up.
Even with a few unintentional pauses and laughter, it's an excellent performance,
very spirited. There is much applause. When the song ends,
the guys scramble to remember the chords for the next song.**

BENJ
We have to figure everything out as we go.
I hope you will indulge us.

While the applause fades, Mod steps up to his microphone. He is really happy to be there.

MOD
Can we see a show of hands of everybody here that's from the Fredonia High School Class of ’68?

About 50 hands go up from an audience that has grown in size to 250 people.

HEN
Who the hell are you? I don't recognize you!

BENJ
And who are the rest of you people?

The audience gives out a big roar of approval. The guys scramble to relearn the next song.

GAD
We’re figuring these songs out as we go, so stick with us, okay?

BENJ
Whoa, I think we'll slow things down now, but not too much.
"Under the Boardwalk"

The Wretched Group launches into a very mellow version of UNDER THE BOARDWALK.
Benj sings lead. Hen does the bass vocal part. Gad also sings back up.
The 12-string guitar really adds to the arrangement. Benj is shinning.
This is one of the songs that he really wanted to sing.

Brenda is videotaping from the front row. So is Jane.
Missy and Sarah are also in the front, really digging this music from another time and place. They are dancing to every song. Dusty is over in the corner near his father.
Rev. and Mrs. Modisher are dancing together over on the other side of the stage.
Gad's Mom, MARY and his sister, BETH, age 47, long brown hair with highlights, 5’9"tall, very beautiful, are also in the front. Smacks's Mom, PATTI, is near them. She is very short and round. Benj’s parents are also nearby.
There is moderate applause suitable to the beat of the song.

BENJ
Thank you. Ya know, this gig probably wouldn't have happened without the Internet. We really hadn't seen each other in about 31 years –
which is all leading up to the fact that Gad wrote a special song about this, about our thing here, called "Old Friends.”

The other guys scramble to find the song's lead sheets which are trampled on the floor. Mod speaks to Smacks off mic.

MOD
Who is that beautiful woman?

SMACKS
That's Gad's sister, Beth.

MOD
Wow...

GAD
Ready, Guys?

Gad plays the introduction to OLD FRIENDS alone on his 12-string guitar for 4 bars. There was supposed to be another 4 bars of introduction, this time with the full band. However, the band thinks that the verse is supposed to start after the first 4 bars. It is a train wreck, which lasts for these second 4 bars of introduction. Gad continues to play the second 4 bars, whereas the band is lost trying to play the verse.

Everyone laughs. Gad is able to pull it together when the verse was supposed to start after a full 8 bars of introduction. The band momentarily stops to see what's going on while Gad continues to play the first verse. After another moment, the band gets with it. Everyone starts to play in unison.

Quale could play along with anything. During the lead guitar bridge, Quale adds a creative drum part. Benj is trying his best, but he is just not familiar enough with the song, although he does get the lead guitar bridge notes the way they were written.

Gad also plays these notes. Smacks, Mod, and Hen are trying to read the song off of the lead sheet that Gad originally provided. It has been crumpled up and walked all over, being found just at the last second before the performance. Nevertheless, this song is important to Gad, and he gives a strong performance as a solo singer/songwriter. This song could have used much more rehearsal time. It was only played once before during rehearsals.

The band does manage to work its way through the entire song though. It is not one of the Wretched Group's finest moments, but it's not entirely a wipe-out either. It's somewhere in between. OLD FRIENDS is the only original song that they will perform at the reunion though. That makes it extra-special in the grand scheme of things, at least to Gad, if not to anyone else. When the song ends, the audience is somewhat appreciative. It wasn't a party song, and this crowd wants to p-a-r-t-y…

The Wretched Group played for four hours that night. To give an impression of a longer concert performance than is possible in the screenplay, 30 second song excerpts are joined together in real-time. Six songs are excerpted without any break in between each song.

This section of excerpts is presented in three minutes.
Each of the other (non-excerpted) songs that are played in their entirety never exceeds three minutes.

The songs that are excerpted during the first set are as follows:
1. THE GAME OF LOVE. 2. GIMMIE SOME LOVIN' 3. HOUSE OF THE RISING SUN.
4. SO YOU WANNA BE A ROCK N ROLL STAR? 5. WHEN A MAN LOVES A WOMAN.
6. YOU REALLY GOT ME.

In other words, Each full song never exceeds three minutes during the gig.
When songs are excerpted, they continue for 30 seconds only.
Since six songs are excerpted, this segment lasts for three minutes,
the same length of time that the full songs are played.
The goal here is to make these three minutes of excerpts seem like more than 30 minutes of performance time. This technique is used once during rehearsals
and it will be repeated once in the second set of these Thursday night performances.

As the excerpted songs end, the sunset is shown over Lake Erie.

GAD
Check this sun out! Did you know

Hen and Benj suddenly interrupt Gad, suspecting that he is about to preach about Christ.

HEN
Sunsets over Lake Erie...

BENJ
It's great to be back.

However, Gad knows what they are attempting. Gad promised that he wouldn't preach. Nevertheless, he is a bit shocked that he would be so rudely interrupted.

GAD
It's such a lovely sunset tonight. God loves you all
But unless you come to Jesus...

Groans from the audience. Newt laughs at the absurdity.
He looks at Gad thinking that there is, indeed, something of the old rebel Gad still there.

BENJ (Interrupting Gad)
Let's do "Gloria."

The Wretched Group performs GLORIA. In the middle of the song there is a short improvisation between Hen and Benj that goes like this:

BENJ
Is there anyone named Gloria here tonight?

HEN
There she is. You have just won a new car.
Mod, did you leave your keys in your car?

MOD
Ah...No...

The Wretched Group ends GLORIA on a high note with much applause.

BENJ
We'll be back after a short break.

HEN
Have a lot of drinks, folks. We'll sound much better then.

GAD
And don't forget to tip your bartenders.
They're working hard for you tonight.

The female bartenders are shown busy as bees.

EXT. THE DOCKSIDE CAFE. NIGHT

Gad puts on a break tape that plays the Beach Boy song, "LET'S GO AWAY FOR A WHILE. The Wretchies all leave the stage, each going in separate directions, to their families first, and then to mingle with their classmates in the crowd. However, Gad stays by the stage to watch over the equipment.
An anonymous female, age 21, and an anonymous male, age 23, approach Gad.

ANONYMOUS FEMALE
Excuse me. Aren't you the guy who sings about Jesus all over the place.
And aren't you the guy who writes all those letters in the newspaper about Christ's second coming?

GAD
Yes I am

ANONYMOUS FEMALE
Do you really think that abortion is murder?

GAD
Yes, I do.

ANONYMOUS MALE

Why?

GAD

God created man in His own image. We are not just animals that somehow evolved by chance. Human life is sacred.

ANONYMOUS FEMALE

But, the fetus isn't a person...

Gad moves closer to this couple.

GAD

That's just what they want you to believe. Life begins at conception.
Any good DNA scientist will tell you the truth.

ANONYMOUS MALE

Who are the "they" you speak of?

GAD

It's much like Marxism: the truth doesn't matter,
only the ends they wish to achieve. You see, without God,
truth and morality become merely relative.
When the Nazis murdered the Jewish people, they depersonalized them first, just as the fetus is depersonalized today. With depersonalization comes the atrocities. In 1934, Nazi Deputy Party Leader, Rudolph Hess, said that National Socialism was nothing but applied biology. Today, we have a silent holocaust with 30 million innocent babies murdered since Roe v. Wade.
We are all accountable to God for our actions.

Gad turns to the camera, and speaks directly to the film audience.

GAD

Only in Christ can we find forgiveness...

ANONYMOUS FEMALE

Isn't it against religion to play rock music in a bar?

GAD

No, it isn't. Besides, I'm not a religious person.
Religious people don't go where sinners are.
Religious people are way too self righteous.
They act as if they don't need God for anything.
They are “Christian” in name only.
Do you know what the first religion was?
It was when Adam and Eve made fig leaf coverings.
It didn’t work then and it doesn’t work now.

ANONYMOUS FEMALE

We believe in God, and we believe that Jesus is His Son.
But, we just don't want to stop havin' fun.

GAD
The Christian faith is much more than just believing the truth about Christ.
Demons also believe that Jesus is God's son and they tremble in fear.

ANONYMOUS FEMALE
What do you have to do to be saved then?

GAD
Did you know that most people miss heaven by 12 inches?

ANONYMOUS MALE
What? What do you mean by that? 12 inches... Come on now.

GAD
12 inches is the distance from your head to your heart.
Many people believe the truth about Jesus in their minds,
and this is a good thing - as far as it goes.
The problem is that the message hasn't reached the heart...

At this crucial point, one of Quale's cymbals comes crashing to the stage floor.
Quale has had too much to drink, and the cymbal slipped out of his hands
as he was adjusting it. Quale looks embarrassed, but only momentarily.

ANONYMOUS FEMALE
But why isn't believing enough?

GAD
The faith that God requires for us to be saved means to trust
in Christ's sacrifice on the cross. None of us are good enough
to meet God's perfect standards. And so, Christ suffered and died
for us on the cross. He did for us what we couldn't do for ourselves.
He did this so that He could make a way to heaven for us.
Through His sacrifice, everyone who trusts in Him and is baptized
can be forgiven all sin and be born again from above to eternal life in Christ.
Jesus paid the price for our sins.
In Christ, we find peace with God.

ANONYMOUS MALE
What about all the other religions? Don't they all really say the same things?

GAD
No. Not at all

ANONYMOUS MALE
But, what about all the people who have never heard of Christ?

GAD
God is just. He will judge them by the standards of morality by which they have judged others, and which they have failed to keep themselves.

The Wretched Group are going back on stage now. Gad notices and bring this conversation to a gentle close.

GAD
Well, I guess that we're ready to start playing again, and I'd better be going.

ANONYMOUS FEMALE
Thanks for talkin' to us.

ANONYMOUS MALE
Yeah, thanks.

Gad starts to walk away. He stops. He turns back to say one last thing.

GAD
Oh yeah, does it look like I'm havin' any fun?

ANONYMOUS MALE
It sure does, dude...

Hen calls to Gad from the stage.

HEN
C'mon, Gad... we're on.

Gad climbs on to the stage. He straps on his guitar and turns on his amplifier. Gad turns around and turns off the cassette player right after LET'S GO AWAY FOR A WHILE ends.

HEN
We're back.

BARTENDER/M.C.
Ladies and gentlemen, once again, our old friends. The Wretched Group...

The audience has grown to 500 people. There is a roar of approval, whoops and hollers, and grateful applause. The stage lights go on. The Wretched Group horn section has set up to stage right near Benj. Benj has rehearsed them, and it's Benj who is going to help them make this a night to remember forever.

Once again, we have: sax (female),

**sax (female), clarinet (female), trumpet (male), trumpet (male), and flute (female).
Missy and Sarah are sharing a vocal mic behind Hen who is dancing and singing center-stage. Gad and Benj are stage right. Mod and Smacks are stage left.
Quale is center-stage behind Hen and the girls.**

HEN
"Sock It To Me."

GAD
Richard Nixon on Laugh-In: "Sock it to me?"

BENJ
All right, Quale, take us there...

**Quale plays a wild introduction for 15 seconds. It is awe-inspiring.
The full band comes in for SOCK IT TO ME. The horn section adds another dimension to the Wretched Group. It is their first ever performance with a horn section.
It sounds really good. The audience loves this song.
There is a lot of dancing and groovin'. When the song ends,
the crowd goes wild. It is a triumphal moment for the Wretchies.**

**After the Wretched Group finishes playing SOCK IT TO ME,
there is a non real-time blurred effect that indicates a passage of time.
When the group is seen again, the Wretched Group Horns have left the stage.
Other songs must have been performed in between SOCK IT TO ME
and the next full song performance, SOMEBODY TO LOVE, by the Jefferson Airplane.
Again, it is a spirited performance.
Benj gets all the lead guitar lines down perfectly.
Hen is movin' and groovin' just like he did in high school.
Mod and Smacks are beaming. Gad is concentrating on playing the right chords
and singing back up. Quale is holding it all together with his spectacular drumming.
No one else is on stage. The audience is with the Wretchies 100 percent.
They are also movin' and groovin'.**

**Practically none of these people can relate to the darkness of heavy metal and rap,
or to the teenage pop of the contemporary music scene.
But, here tonight, every song is a welcomed event.
These songs live in their hearts and minds.
These are the songs by which their identities have been formed.
The Wretchies are bringing SOMEBODY TO LOVE to a conclusion
in a way that is similar to the best of any type of competitive race.
Yet they all cross the finish line together.**

HEN
Yes!

BENJ
Does it get any better than this?

MOD
Now we’re startin’ to get it. Thirty years is a long time to catch up with in a few days.

GAD
Somebody to love!

The audience, holding at 500 people, is wildly appreciative.
It doesn't seem like it could get any better, but it does.

BENJ
Okay guys, let’s do, "Stand By Me."

The Wretchies, with Benj singing lead, proceed to play, STAND BY ME.
Missy and Sarah are back on vocals, standing behind Hen.
Everyone sings on the chorus. Each verse gets more intense.
The song builds up after every chorus. The last two choruses are extremely high voltage.
When the song ends, the crowd really feels a loss. Nevertheless, there is much applause.

This is, indeed, a very special night. The weather is ideal.
The songs are everyone's favorites. The group is wretched. The moon is full.
Also, during the instrumental solo, Gad, who has turned up his guitar volume, plays two lead guitar solos for two verses.
For this brief moment, the original Wretched Group instrumental configuration could be heard.

HEN
Well, All right. Well, all right.

Hen lights up a cigar. He will be smoking for the rest of the gig.

GAD
I'd like to take you back to our first gig at the Dunkirk Junior High School.

This time, it is Mod who believes it is his duty to interrupt Gad before any possible preaching breaks out.

MOD
Class, please with the talking...

BENJ
Please with the talking.

GAD
This song goes out to my lovely inspiration, my beloved sister Vashou.

Gad starts to play the opening chords to DON'T LET THE SUN CATCH YOU CRYING.
The band gets with it right away. It is a slow song, and Gad's vocal performance is right on. The band provides excellent back up. Gad's sister is illuminated in the crowd,

**as if she is the only one there. She has recently been divorced,
and this song is very meaningful for her. This song was the first song Gad ever sang
in public with the Wretched Group so long ago. It is, therefore, very meaningful to him as
well. In a sense, a full circle has been made with the past.
When the song ends, there is polite applause,
mostly from the people up front who have been slow dancing.**

BENJ
"Summer In The City," Hit it Smacks.

**Smacks plays the memorable organ introduction for, SUMMER IN THE CITY,
the band's favorite song by the Lovin' Spoonful. Hen is smoking his cigar
while he sings lead. The band is really playing in unison.
This is everything they had hoped for, and more.
Both Jane and Brenda are videotaping from changing positions,
as they have been doing throughout the entire evening.
This reunion could well be a once in a lifetime event.
The Wretchies are truly playing like there is no tomorrow.
Each player is giving everything, and more.
As the song is racing to its conclusion, Sandi and Suzi appear in the front row.
When the song ends, Sandi yells.**

SANDI
Do The Hump.

**The people nearby pick up on this phrase. The chant spreads through the crowd very
quickly.**

THE AUDIENCE
**Do The Hump. Do The Hump. Do The Hump. Do The Hump.
Do The Hump. Do The Hump.**

**The Wretched Group needs no encouragement. They begin to play, THE HUMP.
The audience reacts with wild approval. Sandi and Suzi are sexy dancing together.
This song performance only lasts for 30 seconds.
This begins another sequence of song performance excerpts in real time,
and without break in between songs.**

**1. THE HUMP. 2. LIGHT MY FIRE. 3. TAXMAN. 4. MY GIRL.
5. FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH. 6. ALL ALONG THE WATCHTOWER.
During the excerpts, the Wretched Group is seen playing in real time,
and with all of their hearts.**

**The gig is coming to an end as midnight approaches.
The crowd has remained until the very last note.
Everyone really wants to savor this once in a lifetime experience.
As the song excerpts finish, Benj speaks to the crowd in a very weak voice.
There's just about enough left for one more song.**

BENJ
Well, this could be the last time the Wretched Group ever plays together.

GAD
As it should be.

HEN
It's been really awesome for us...

MOD
Thanks for bein' here with us...

SMACKS
I'll second that.

Quale starts to play another spectacular drum introduction which lasts for 15 seconds. The Wretched Group members come in, one by one, just like they used to in high school. Quale first, then Mod on Bass, Benj on guitar, Smacks on organ, Gad on guitar, and finally Hen on lead vocal. The song is: DANCIN' IN THE STREETS. It was always the band's favorite way to say "good night," and it is the perfect last song for this reunion gig. As soon as Hen starts to sing, the audience recognizes the song. There is really wild approval from the crowd. Gad sings the middle eight by himself.

Sandi and Suzi are still dancing in the front row. In high school. Hen would have danced with them while he was singing. And he still wants to. However, out of respect to Jane, Newt is much more restrained. Hen is still smoking his cigar though. He is improvising the song lyrics to add local places: Dunkirk, Fredonia, Silver Creek, Brockton, Van Buren, Forestville, Laona. Jane and Brenda are still videotaping. Missy and Sarah are having genuine fun, really getting into it, dancing together. Dusty is playing tambourine over in the corner, next to Mod. Micky Mamp, Vince and John (all drummers) are a percussion section, with tambourine, maracas, and cowbell.

It is an awesome climax to an unforgettable evening. When the song ends, the audience really goes nuts. The Wretchies unplug, and wave good night. Quale, Hen, Benj, Smacks, Gad and Mod line up left to right. Their arms hug each other in this line-up. It is a perfect photo finish for Deidra She is the 35mm photographer for the band. A still frame is shown of this triumphal moment while the crowd noise fades out. After they leave the stage, the crowd applause continues. The Wretched Group comes back on stage to say goodnight.

MOD
We are wiped o u t! (Big breath) But we want to say goodnight and thanks Like we used to back in the day.

The Wretched Group lines up, Quale, Hen, Benj, Smacks, Mod and Gad -

arms around each person as they sing HAPPY TRAILS (TIL WE MEET AGAIN) with only Gad on guitar - after which they leave the stage.

The guys are about as happy as anyone could be. They actually did pull this thing off. After the photos are taken, and after the crowd settles down.
Gad puts on the Beach Boy instrumental, LET'S GO AWAY FOR AWHILE,
as background to cool down by. Hen, Quale, Smacks, Benj, and Mod all leave the stage to mingle with the crowd where they each receive abundant congratulations.
Gad stays behind to begin taking down the equipment, mics and cables first.
Mod returns to speak with Gad for a brief moment.

MOD
Hey man, I just wanted to thank you for doing all the work so we could mingle.

GAD
My pleasure. Mod. You've come along way for this reunion.
It's the least I can do.

MOD
Thanks again. Gad.

Mod goes back into the crowd. There's a lot of backslapping over beers.
As Gad continues to unplug and wrap mic cables,
the anonymous male and female approach him again.

ANONYMOUS MALE
That was an awesome concert, dude.

ANONYMOUS FEMALE
You guys were really rockin' tonight.

Gad puts down the mic cable he was winding. He wants to give full attention to these eager younger folks.

GAD
Thanks. You know, I never got your names.

ANONYMOUS MALE
I'm Duke, and this is,

ANONYMOUS FEMALE
My name is Barbra.

Gad does a slight double take because the woman he had an abortion with was also named Barb.

GAD
Everybody calls me Gad.

BARBRA
Gad, we wanted you to know that we gave our hearts to Jesus tonight.

GAD
That's really wonderful. You know, It's the most important decision you will ever make in your lives.

BARBRA
We've also decided not to have an abortion. We're going to get married, and we're going to have our baby.

DUKE
We know it's what God would have us do.

Tears of joy fill Gad's eyes as he experiences a moment that will live in his heart for eternity.

GAD
Yes, you can be sure of that.

BARBRA
Thanks for bein' true, Gad. We won't forget you.

GAD
You can forget me, but please, don't forget Jesus who died for you. He said, "If you love me, keep my commandments."

BARBRA
We won't forget. God bless you, Gad.

Barbra and Duke walk away, hand in hand, into the night. As they leave, LET'S GO AWAY FOR A WHILE comes to an end. Next, on the after-gig tape, a Beach Boys' song, PLEASE LET ME WONDER, from the "Today" album, plays out through the P.A. sound system. This song was always Gad and Suzi's special song. Gad feels this memory intensely, and then he resumes packing up the band's equipment. The crowd has thinned out to 200 people. There is a full moon.

EXT. FOUR POINTS HOTEL PARKING LOT. NIGHT

Happy and loose from drinking too much, and from the excitement of the Wretched Group reunion, Sandi and Suzi are walking, and stumbling, arm in arm, into the parking lot from the Dockside Cafe exit/entrance. When they hear, PLEASE LET ME WONDER, Suzi stops dead in her tracks. It all comes back to her in a moment of intense emotion. She loved Gad like she never loved before. Sandi tries to pull Suzi along, but without success. With a very serious, no nonsense, expression, Suzi breaks free of Sandi. Sandi reluctantly understands. After all, there is a full moon tonight. Suzi turns to stumble back to the cafe as the song comes to an end. It remains a mystery as to what happens with Gad and Suzi that night.

EXT. SMACKS'S BACKYARD POOL GATE. DAY

It is Friday morning at 10:00 A.M. Gad arrives at Smacks's. He sees Smacks putting up a sign on his backyard pool gate. The sign reads: "Sorry, No Party Here Today."

GAD
Smacks, What's up?

SMACKS
It sure as hell isn't the surf, Gad. Somebody threw some old chairs and furniture into the pool last night.

GAD
Quale?

SMACKS
I've got no proof. But... He did invite a lot of people to a party here today. I had to say "no" to him when he asked, but he went ahead and did it anyway.

Gad reads the message on the sign.

SMACKS
Everybody is losing their patience with Quale. His behavior has been so adolescent, it's really sad.

GAD
Maybe it was the long bus ride...

SMACKS
Charley told me that things got so bad with Quale that he had to ask him to leave his house.

GAD
Quale's got a lot of problems The substance abuse just adds fuel to the fire.

SMACKS
I could lose my pharmacist license if anyone found out. This morning, he told me that he slept on the beach last night.

GAD
I hope he'll look up his Aunt Carolyn like I suggested to him. But, you never know if he is listening to you, or not.

SMACKS
I know what you mean. It's always got to be his way.

Gad and Smacks take a few steps away from the pool gate toward the house.

GAD

I worked as a handyman for his aunt a while back, not knowing who she was. Her daughter, Carol, lived in town too. Do you remember Quale's cousin, Carol?

SMACKS

Yes, I do. She used to come here every summer in high school. She was a big Wretched Group fan back then.

GAD

The family moved here after we graduated. Carol became quite an athlete, and she worked as a registered nurse. When I met her, she remembered me. But, I didn't recall her at all.

SMACKS

That happens to all of us. Gad.

Gad and Smacks stop walking.

GAD

Yeah, right. It's embarrassing. Anyway, Carol had many physical complications from a really bad case of diabetes. She told me that she had lost faith in God. She couldn't understand why she had to be in so much pain.

SMACKS

That's a hard one to come to terms with, isn't it?

GAD

Yes, especially in this fallen world where things are not as God originally intended. We use to talk about Jesus a lot. You know, Smacks, those phony TV preachers do so much harm to God's little ones when they say that the reason they are not healed is that they don't have enough faith. All they really care about is money, fame and power.

SMACKS

You're right, Gad. They do hurt a lot of people.

GAD

As my mom says, "I wouldn't want to be in their shoes on judgment day..."
(Pause)
Anyway, I used to see Carol almost everyday, especially when she had to go for her dialysis treatments. I'd carry her in and out of her wheelchair and carry her in and out of her aunt's car. She was in so much pain.

SMACKS

You know Gad, that doesn't seem like the typical handyman job to me.

GAD

Just before she passed away, she told me that her faith in God had been renewed.

I'm glad that she's with the Lord now, and that she is not suffering anymore.

There are tears in Gad's eyes.

SMACKS
That really is "good news," Gad.

Smacks tries to change the subject when he sees God's tears.

SMACKS
This has been a really amazing week though, all things considered.

GAD
Don't you know it. My first bar gig in 20 years. Legalists would say that I have fallen away, but I'll let Christ be my judge, not them.

SMACKS
We said that we'd meet up at the hospital in Jamestown to sing for Hen's mom. Quale's going with Hen. Benj and Mod are going separately.

GAD
I brought my Martin Backpacker Guitar. I put it in your car. Are you ready to go?

SMACKS
Yeah, let's hit the road.

EXT. JAMESTOWN HOSPITAL PARKING LOT. DAY

All six Wretchies are standing in a circle in the parking lot of the Jamestown hospital where Hen's mom is recovering from her broken leg.

BENJ
What song should we do?

HEN
How about, "Under the Boardwalk"?

Everyone laughs uproariously. Newt has lost his voice after giving all he had at last's night's reunion gig. His voice is noticeably lower and gruff. His voice is shot. This is very humorous to the other Wretchies. Even Hen finds it amusing.

MOD
You got it. Hen. We'll do "Under The Boardwalk" for your mom.

The Wretchies walk into the hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL RECREATION ROOM. DAY

The Wretchies walk into the Recreation Room. Hen's mom is sitting in a wheelchair. Her face lights up when she sees Hen, followed by the rest of the band. WHEN LOVE WALKED IN plays for the film audience.

HEN
Hi, Mom.

HEN'S MOM
Hello, dear. Hi, boys. What happened to your voice, Henry?

HEN
We pulled out all the stops last night.

Everyone laughs belly laughs when Hen speaks.

GAD
Hi, Mrs. McKee. You know, I've been meaning to ask you, how high did you bounce when you fell off of that ladder?

HEN'S MOM
Very funny. Gad.

GAD
You know, its not the fall that hurts, it's the sudden stop...

Everyone is laughing.

HEN (Laughing)
Enough. I can't take it anymore...

MOD
Seriously, we hope that you aren't in too much pain, Mrs. M.

BENJ
Where's Quale?

MOD
Oh, he'll be in when he's ready.

HEN'S MOM
I'm so sorry that I missed your reunion last night.

SMACKS
Well, we thought we'd bring the reunion to you.

BENJ
Gad brought his Backpacker guitar.

GAD
What's your favorite song, Mrs. M.?

HEN'S MOM
Oh, that's easy. It's called, "When Love Walked In."
It was our special song, Henry's father and mine...

The song comes to an end.

SMACKS
We don't know that one.

BENJ
Lets do "Under The Boardwalk."

The five Wretchies, minus Quale, sing UNDER THE BOARDWALK for Hen's mom.
While they sing. Quale comes in stoned. He stands up against a distant wall and listens.
There are 20 other persons in wheelchairs in the recreation room
that are very happy to have some live musical entertainment.
Newt's mom feels very special. The song ends. Quale joins the group.

QUALE
Hi, Mrs. M.

HEN'S MOM
Oh boys, I can't thank you enough. This is so special.
You all have your class reunion tonight, don't you?

SMACKS
Yep. And we owe it all to our first grade teacher.

HEN'S MOM
Thank you, boys. That means a lot to me.
By the way, I wanted to ask why there wasn't a 30th year reunion
for your class last year.

SMACKS
Our class is known for its distinctive mistakes...

BENJ
As I understand, there wasn't any effort made.

SMACKS
A lot of bad feelings about past reunions that were limited to a small
clique of locals. This year we have a new reunion committee,
and we've been able to contact almost everyone in our class.

HEN
Nice! So, it's "thirty-plus-one" for the Class of '68.

Ma, we've got to go now.

HEN'S MOM
I understand, son. Thanks for bringing your reunion to me everyone.

Newt and his mom hug. The other Wretchies leave the Recreation Room.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT. DAY

The five Wretchies are in a circle. Hen walks up to them and joins the circle. He has tears in his eyes and is really choked-up.

HEN
Guys, I can't tell you how much this means to mom and me. I'll never forget it.

GAD
Who's up for Johnny's Texas Hot

QUALE
Johnny's Texas Hots! Let's do it.

MOD
It's all coming back to me now. Johnny's Texas Hots...

SMACKS
Do you remember, Benj?

BENJ
Do I remember? Yes, indeed.

HEN
Yes, indeed ... Last one there pays the bill. I don't remember the way from here.

GAD
I'll go with the Benj. Gentlemen, start your engines.

Everyone scrambles to get into their vehicles. The race is on. However, the winner of the race, and the loser who paid the bill, remains a mystery.

EXT. POINT GRATIOT PARK. DAY

The Class of 1968 is gathered together under a picnic pavilion at Point Gratiot Park in Dunkirk. It is a beautiful lakeside setting. The reunion has been going since 6:00 P.M. It is 9:00 P.M. and there is a spectacular sunset over the lake on the horizon. Gad is the D.J. for the reunion. The sound system is set up inside the pavilion. Gad is wearing a different Hawaiian shirt than he did for the gig.

**There are 250 classmates, family and friends at this class reunion.
There are big beer bellies, couples out of love, singles looking for that special someone they used to know, married people acting single, and way too much alcohol consumption.**

**Gad is playing a special song by Van Morrison, WHENEVER GOD SHINES HIS LIGHT.
From a distance away, Quale is walking, and stumbling, towards the reunion pavilion.
He is experiencing the effects of substance abuse. The substance is unknown.
Quale stumbles and falls. He hits the ground hard, but he gets up laughing to himself.
No one notices. Quale is too far away. As he walks closer to the pavilion,
the mixture of conversational noise gets louder. As Quale walks into the pavilion,
he really looks a mess. He tries to be the life of the party, but most people ignore him.
What used to work for him in his teenage years is no longer appropriate for a man of 49 years. Other people glad-handle him. Quale seems to be oblivious to the cool reception he is receiving.**

When Quale sees Gad, he rushes over to speak to him. Gad is behind the sound mixer on a picnic table. Quale speaks to him in a slurred, almost incomprehensible manner.

QUALE
Gad. Thanks for sending me to my Aunt Carolyn. Charley kicked me out of his house, and I slept on the beach last night. My aunt has set me up at the Four Points with a lake view room... for as long as I'm here.

GAD
I'm glad to hear that, Quale. Your aunt is a special person to me.

**In a strange moment, Quale seems to be entirely sober and clear speaking.
Perhaps it is his emotions speaking.**

QUALE
She told me all that you did for my cousin, Carol. We were really close growin' up. I can't thank you enough, man. Just let me know if there is anything I can ever do for you. I mean it sincerely, Gad.

GAD
**Quale, when I first saw Carol again, after all these years,
she told me that she had lost her faith in God because of all the pain she was in.
We used to talk about Jesus a lot. Just before she passed away,
she told me that her faith had been renewed...
Quale, if you would do anything for me,
promise that you will read that book I gave to you with an open mind.
And think about how much Jesus loves you.**

QUALE (Sincerely)
Sure, Gad. You got it.

Suzi arrives at the reunion. She is dressed a little more conservatively.

**She is wearing a very feminine white summer dress. It is above her knees nevertheless.
She is wearing flat sandals. She still looks like a summer dream.
She spots Gad right away. It is an electric moment. She starts to walk over to him.**

QUALE
Gad, isn't that Suzi?

**Gad turns to see Suzi. It is a made for the movies moment. However,
what happens to Gad and Suzi is still a mystery.**

**The whole pavilion area is seen now with the class reunion in full swing.
The Van Morrison song, WHENEVER GOD SHINES HIS LIGHT, ends.
The Class of '68 reunion M.C., FRANK LEONE, Age 49, 6'0" tall,
well dressed in white shirt, and pleated dress pants,
speaks to his classmates with a wireless mic over the P.A. - no music.**

FRANK LEONE
**Our reunion committee has done a tremendous amount of work to track down
as many of our classmates as we could.
A special thanks to everyone who helped put this reunion together this year.
Did anyone ever think that we'd hear The Wretched Group play together again?**

The crowd applauds, whoops and hollers.

FRANK LEONE
**Thanks, guys. You really made this reunion something extra special.
Several of our class officers are here tonight.
They were important to us back then, and they are important to us today.
We also thought it would be nice to remember our classmates who are no longer
with us: Tommy Conti, Meg Foster, Charlie James, Natalie Privatera,
James Shultz, Lois Tompkins, Steve Wood, and Kirk Best.**

**Little plastic cups of cheap champagne have been distributed for a special toast
to the Class of 1968. The sunset over Lake Erie is especially beautiful.
Just as the sun dips out of sight, Frank Leone makes the toast.**

FRANK LEONE
**Now let's raise our glasses for a special toast to the Class of nine-teen-sixty-eight.
By the way... I thought you'd like to know that Gad just said that this looks
just like "Jonestown." A-n-y-w-a-y...
Here's to the Class of '68. Long may we p-a-r-t-y!**

**The afterglow of the sunset is shown. The Beach Boy's song, SURF'S UP,
is used for the closing update which is superimposed over the sunset afterglow.
The water of the lake is half screen size. The sky, also half screen size,
is a very colorful cloud extravaganza. Gad and Suzi are walking along the beach,
hand in hand.**

Before the actual film credits appear, an update of The Wretched Group is displayed as follows:

HEN married Jane in December. He's covered Winter Olympics ski competitions as an editor for his magazine. His annual Saint Divot's extreme golf event in Vermont has taken on legendary proportions.

BENJ sold his law practice and started up his own record company, Planet Noise Records. His own near-perfect album of originals is called "Heebie Jeebies."

SMACKS changed employers, from Top's to Rite Aid. He also became the President of the Fredonia School Board and visited Abbey Road in England with the fam.

MOD is back in Hawaii, on the Big Island, in Kona Kailua.
He continues to build houses and he got Dusty a guitar.

QUALE started up Missouri's first all-gay country and western band, and is continuing his adventures in agriculture, and splat ball manufacturing.

GAD wrote this screenplay, returned to his Greek Orthodox roots and continues to write and perform contemporary Christian music.

BRIAN WILSON performed the entire Pet Sounds album on tour with an outta-site rock band during the summer of 2000.
Gad was in the seventh row at the Molson outdoor theatre gig in Toronto - exactly one year after the Wretched Group reunion.
Dennis and Carl would have been very proud.

LEE STROBEL wrote a follow-up to, "The Case for Christ."
He calls it, "The Case for Faith."

At this point, the song SURF'S UP concludes and the actual film credits are shown in their entirety. PUT YOUR HAND IN THE HAND OF THE MAN, By Elvis Presley, is played.

After the credits conclude, the following Bible Scripture is displayed in receding, Star Wars style, centered, script where the credits had been superimposed. Distant stars and galaxies are displayed against the black background of outer space. NEPTUNE, from The Planets, by Gustav Holtz is heard.

"FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, JESUS CHRIST THAT WHOSOEVER TRUSTS IN HIM, SHOULD NOT PERISH, BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE." (John 3:16)

THE END

FADE OUT.